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Non-Emergency Transportation (NET) COVID-19 Member Guidance

Last updated 5/22/20

Question: Since Governor Mills' released her Stay Healthy at Home executive order, is NET still available for my appointments?

Answer: The latest information about what Mainers need to know regarding Governor Mills' orders and guidance regarding COVID-19 can be found [here](#).

NET will remain available for MaineCare members. However, Governor Mills has requested that we encourage you to reschedule all non-urgent or time-sensitive appointments to reduce exposure to COVID-19 for you, your healthcare providers, and the NET drivers.

Question: Do I need to wear a face covering if I take NET?

Answer: Yes. Under Governor Mills' extension of the Stay at Home Order, starting May 1, 2020, MaineCare members and NET drivers are required to wear cloth face coverings during NET rides, as physical distancing measures are difficult to maintain. Under the order, cloth face coverings are not required for children under age two, for anyone who has trouble breathing, for anyone with other medical conditions that prevent wearing a mask, or for anyone who is otherwise unable to remove a mask without assistance. **Please alert the broker if you are not able to wear a face covering when you call to schedule the ride.**

If you have a disability that you believe prevents you from participating in, or fully benefiting from the MaineCare NET program, and you believe that there is a reasonable change that could be made, , you may ask the Department to make a change to the program under the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). You can find additional information on how to request a reasonable modification [here](#).

If you do not alert the broker, have not made a reasonable modification request that has been approved, are not wearing a cloth face covering when the driver arrives, or refuse to wear a cloth face covering, the ride may be denied if the driver believes there is a direct threat to the safety of others or if the ride will be shared with other members.

Question: Will the driver provide me with a face covering for my ride?

Answer: No. MaineCare members are expected to provide their own face coverings. More information about homemade cloth face coverings can be found [here](#), and [here](#) is information about cloth face coverings sold by Maine manufacturers.

Question: Will my driver have to wear a face covering?

Answer: Yes. Drivers are required to wear a cloth face covering, unless they are unable to do so. Drivers who cannot wear a face covering must have a clear plastic barrier installed in their vehicles to isolate the driver from riders.

Question: If I need to go to the doctor for COVID-19 evaluation or testing, will I be able to take NET?

Answer: We recommend that all MaineCare members follow the CDC's advice if you feel sick or believe you have been exposed to COVID-19: call your health care provider before going to your primary care practice or any other healthcare facility. Should your health care provider advise you to go in for testing or evaluation, NET will arrange for your transport to an emergency department through an ambulance provider. **Please alert the broker of the reason for your trip when you call to schedule the ride** so that brokers can appropriately plan for your trip. If you have COVID-19 and require emergency care, call 911.

Question: If I have or might have COVID-19 but I need to go to an essential medical appointment like dialysis or infusion, will I be able to take NET?

Answer: Before requesting a trip, call your health care provider to explore whether any in-home services may be an appropriate alternative to visiting a health care facility. If there are no in-home options, NET will arrange for your transport through an ambulance provider. **Please alert the broker that you have or might have COVID-19 when you call to schedule the ride** so that brokers can appropriately plan for your trip.

Question: If I am sick, will I be able to take NET?

Answer: We recommend that all MaineCare members follow the CDC's advice if you feel sick, especially with symptoms that are common to COVID-19 (e.g. fever, cough, difficulty breathing, or sore throat): call your health care provider before going to your primary care practice or any other health care facility. If your health care provider tells you to go into the office, NET will arrange for your transport using an ambulance. **Please alert the broker that you are sick when you call to schedule the ride** so that brokers can appropriately plan for your trip. If you require emergency care, call 911.

Question: If I take NET, will I have to share the vehicle with other people?

Answer: Brokers are encouraged to schedule solo rides if there are enough drivers available to do so.

Question: How are the NET brokers and transporters preparing for COVID-19?

Answer: Brokers have implemented cleaning protocols for transporters and drivers to keep vehicles sanitized. To limit close contact, brokers are discontinuing their practice of having MaineCare members sign the trip log. Drivers are also required to wear a cloth face covering, unless they are unable to do so for health reasons. Drivers who cannot wear a face covering must have a clear plastic barrier installed in their vehicles to isolate the driver from riders.

Question: If there is a driver shortage, will NET have to prioritize some trips over others?

Answer: The Department is looking closely at contingency planning for a scenario in which there are not enough drivers to meet the demand for rides. We encourage members to take advantage of mileage reimbursement that brokers offer for volunteer drivers (e.g. friends, family, and neighbors).